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PLATO

TITLE:

AXIOCHUS

PLACE:

LONDON

DATE:

[1937]

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Plato. *Spurious and doubtful works.*
The Axiochus; On death and immortality; a Platonic dialogue, edited, with translation, illustrations and notes, by E. H. Blakeney, M. A. London, F. Muller, Ltd. [1937]
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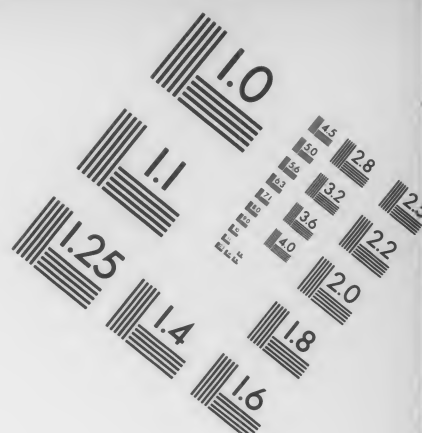
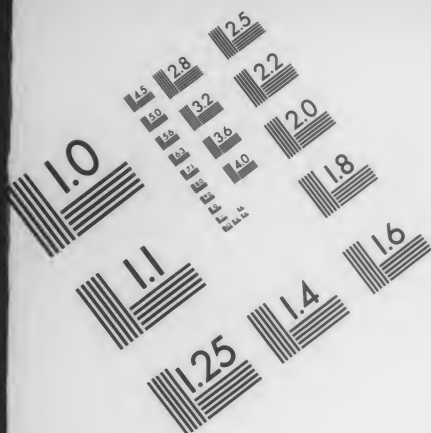
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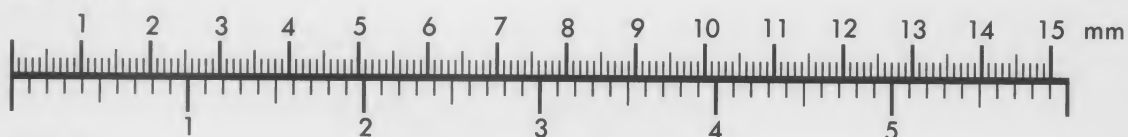
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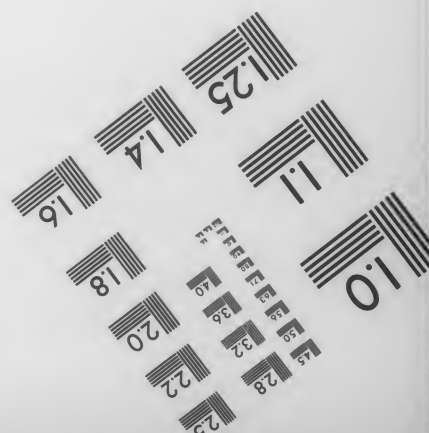
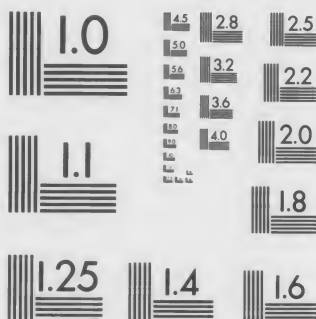
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THE AXIOCHUS
ON DEATH AND
IMMORTALITY

A PLATONIC DIALOGUE

Edited with Translation and Notes
by

E. H. BLAKENEY, M.A.

Columbia University
in the City of New York

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A Platonic Dialogue

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To
EDWYN BEVAN

'I, LIBER, ABSENTIS PIGNUS AMICITIAE'

*There is surely a piece of divinity in us, something that was
before the elements, and owes no homage under the sun.*

SIR THOMAS BROWNE

*—Plato, thou reasonest well;
Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
This longing after immortality?
Or whence this secret dread and inward horror
Of falling into nought? Why shrinks the soul
Back on herself and startles at destruction?
'Tis the divinity that stirs within us;
'Tis heaven itself, that points out an Hereafter
And intimates Eternity to man.*

ADDISON, *Cato*

PREFACE

The present edition of the *Axiochus* is (I believe) the first to be published in this country. Though the dialogue forms part of the Platonic corpus, it is hardly known except to specialists. As my little book is intended not for the learned but for learners, a translation has been given. It may be interesting to note that the great Tudor translators do not appear to have attempted any of Plato's works; but the pseudo-Platonic *Axiochus* was an exception. The version made in 1592 is often attributed to Edmund Spenser, and a facsimile was published at Baltimore, U.S.A., in 1934. My own version, though in no sense a paraphrase, is not always strictly literal; but I hope it gives the meaning of the original with tolerable accuracy.

A book of this sort requires no elaborate commentary; brevity has been my aim. My notes were drafted without reference to any previous commentary; but, in finally revising them for the press, I have examined the Latin notes in Bekker's edition, but to little profit for my purposes.

My thanks are due to friends who have read my version and helped me to detect slips—the Rev. R. Quirk and Mr J. B. Poynton, of Winchester College; to Prof. Forsey of University College, Southampton; also to Prof. H. J. Rose for some valuable information on various points connected with the interpretation of the text. To Prof. A. E. Taylor's fine work on Plato I am, like every student of Plato, much indebted.

E. H. BLAKENEY

*Winchester
April 1937*

ΑΣΙΟΧΟΣ

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΙΑΛΟΓΟΥ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ
ΣΩΚΡΑΤΗΣ, ΚΛΕΙΝΙΑΣ, ΑΣΙΟΧΟΣ

Ι. Ἐξιώντι μοι ἐξ Κυνόσαργες καὶ γενομένῳ κατὰ [364
τὸν Ἰλισσὸν διῆξε φωνὴ βοῶντός του, Σώκρατες,
Σώκρατες. ὥς δὲ ἐπιστραφεὶς περιεσκόπουν ὀπόθεν
εἶη, Κλεινίαν ὀρῶ τὸν Ἀξιόχου θέοντα ἐπὶ Καλλιρρόην
μετὰ Δάμωνος τοῦ μουσικοῦ καὶ Χαρμίδου τοῦ Γλαύ-
κωνος· ἦστην δὲ αὐτοῖν ὁ μὲν διδάσκαλος τῶν κατὰ
μουσικὴν, ὁ δ' ἐξ ἑταιρείας ἐραστὴς ἅμα καὶ ἐρώμενος.
ἐδόκει οὖν μοι ἀφεμένῳ τῆς εὐθὺ ὁδοῦ ἀπαντᾶν αὐτοῖς,
ὅπως ῥᾶστα ὁμοῦ γενοίμεθα. δεδακρυμένος δὲ ὁ Κλει-
νίας, Σώκρατες, ἔφη, νῦν ὁ καιρὸς ἐνδείξασθαι τὴν
ἀεὶ θρυλουμένην πρὸς σοῦ σοφίαν· ὁ γὰρ πατήρ ἔκ
τινος ὠρακίας αἰφνιδίου ἀδυνάτως ἔχει καὶ πρὸς τῷ
τέλει τοῦ βίου ἐστίν, ἀνιαρῶς τε φέρει τὴν τελευτήν,
καίτοι γε τὸν πρόσθεν χρόνον διαχλευάζων τοὺς
μορμολυττομένους τὸν θάνατον καὶ πράως ἐπιτωθά-
ζων. ἀφικόμενος οὖν παρηγόρησον αὐτὸν ὥς εἴωθας,
ὅπως ἀστενακτὶ ἐς τὸ χρεὼν ἴη, καὶ μοι σὺν τοῖς
λοιποῖς ἵνα καὶ τοῦτο εὐσεβηθῇ. Ἄλλ' οὐκ ἀτυχή-
σεις μου, ὦ Κλεινία, οὐδενὸς τῶν μετρίων καὶ ταῦτα
ἐφ' ὅσια παρακαλῶν. ἐπειγώμεθα δ' οὖν· εἰ γὰρ
οὕτως ἔχει, ὠκύτητος δεῖ.

ΚΛ. Ὁφθέντος σου μόνον, ὦ Σώκρατες, ῥαῖσει·
καὶ γὰρ ἤδη πολλάκις αὐτῷ γέγονε συμπτώματος
ἀνασφῆλαι.

ΙΙ. ΣΩ. Ὡς δὲ θᾶπτον τὴν παρὰ τὸ τεῖχος ἤειμεν,

365] ταῖς Ἰτωνίαις—πλησίον γὰρ ᾧκει τῶν πυλῶν, πρὸς τῇ Ἀμαζονίδι στήλῃ—καταλαμβάνομεν αὐτὸν ἤδη μὲν συνειλεγμένον τὰς ἀφὰς καὶ τῷ σώματι ῥωμαλέον, ἀσθενῇ δὲ τὴν ψυχὴν, πάνυ ἐνδεᾶ παραμυθίας, πολ- λάκις δ' ἀναφερόμενον καὶ στεναγμούς ἱέντα σὺν δα- κρύοις καὶ κροτήσεσι χειρῶν. κατιδὼν δὲ αὐτόν, Ἄξιοχε, τί ταῦτα; ἔφην· ποῦ τὰ πρόσθεν αὐχήματα καὶ αἱ συνεχεῖς εὐλογίαι τῶν ἀρετῶν καὶ τὸ ἄρρηκτον ἐν σοὶ θάρσος; ὥς γὰρ ἀγωνιστὴς δειλός, ἐν τοῖς γυμ- νασίοις γενναῖος φαινόμενος, ὑπολέλοιπας ἐν τοῖς ἀθλοῖς. οὐκ ἐπιλογιεῖ τὴν φύσιν περισκεμμένως, ἀνὴρ τοσόσδε τῷ χρόνῳ καὶ κατήκοος λόγων καί, εἰ μηδὲν ἕτερον, Ἀθηναῖος, ὅτι, τὸ κοινὸν δὴ τοῦτο καὶ πρὸς πάντων θρυλούμενον, παρεπιδημία τίς ἐστίν ὁ βίος, καὶ ὅτι δεῖ τοῦτον ἐπιεικῶς διαγαγόντας εὐθύμως μόνον οὐχὶ παιανίζοντας εἰς τὸ χρεῶν ἀπιέναι; τὸ δὲ οὕτω μαλακῶς καὶ δυσάποσπαστως ἔχειν νηπίου δίκην, οὐ περὶ φρονοῦσαν ἡλικίαν ἐστίν.

ΑΖ. Ἀληθῇ ταῦτα, ὦ Σώκρατες, καὶ ὀρθῶς μοι φαίνει λέγων· ἀλλ' οὐκ οἶδ' ὅπως παρ' αὐτὸ τὸ δει- νὸν γενομένῳ οἱ μὲν καρτεροὶ καὶ περιττοὶ λόγοι ὑπεκπνέουσι λεληθότως καὶ ἀτιμάζονται, ἀντίσχει δὲ δέος τι, ποικίλως περιαμύττον τὸν νοῦν, εἰ στερήσο- μαι τοῦδε τοῦ φωτὸς καὶ τῶν ἀγαθῶν, ἀειδὴς δὲ καὶ ἄπυστος ὁποῖοτε κείσομαι σηπόμενος, εἰς εὐλὰς καὶ κνώδαλα μεταβάλλων.

III. ΣΩ. Συνάπτεις γάρ, ὦ Ἀξίοχε, παρὰ τὴν ἀνεπιστάσιαν ἀνεπιλογίστως τῇ ἀναισθησίᾳ αἰσ- θησιν, καὶ σεαυτῷ ὑπεναντία καὶ ποιεῖς καὶ λέγεις, οὐκ ἐπιλογιζόμενος ὅτι ἅμα μὲν ὀδύρει τὴν ἀναισ- θησίαν, ἅμα δὲ ἀλγεῖς ἐπὶ σήψει καὶ στερήσει τῶν ἡδέων, ὥσπερ εἰς ἕτερον ζῆν ἀποθανούμενος, ἀλλ'

οὐκ εἰς παντελῇ μεταβαλὼν ἀναισθησίαν καὶ τὴν αὐτὴν τῇ πρὸ τῆς γενέσεως. ὥς οὖν ἐπὶ τῆς Δράκον- τος ἢ Κλεισθένους πολιτείας οὐδὲν περὶ σὲ κακὸν ἦν· ἀρχὴν γὰρ οὐκ ἦς, περὶ ὃν ἂν ἦν· οὕτως οὐδὲ μετὰ τὴν τελευταίην γενήσεται· σὺ γὰρ οὐκ ἔσει περὶ ὃν ἔσται. πάντα τοιγαροῦν τὸν τοιόνδε φλύαρον ἀπο- σκέδασαι, τοῦτο ἐννοήσας ὅτι, τῆς συγκρίσεως ἅπας διαλυθείσης καὶ τῆς ψυχῆς ἐς τὸν οἰκεῖον ἰδρυθείσης τόπον τὸ ὑπολειφθὲν σῶμα, γεῶδες ὃν καὶ ἄλογον, οὐκ ἔστιν ὁ ἄνθρωπος. ἡμεῖς μὲν γὰρ ἐσμεν ψυχῇ, ζῶν ἀθάνατον ἐν θνητῷ καθειργμένον φρουρίῳ· τὸ [366] δὲ σκῆνος τουτὶ πρὸς κακοῦ περιήρμοσεν ἡ φύσις, ᾧ τὰ μὲν ἡδοντα ἀμυχιαῖα καὶ πτηνὰ καὶ πλείοσιν ὀδύναις ἀνακεκραμένα, τὰ δὲ ἀλγεινὰ ἀκραιφνῇ καὶ πολυχρόνια καὶ τῶν ἡδόντων ἅμοιρα· νόσους δὲ καὶ φλεγμονὰς τῶν αἰσθητηρίων, ἔτι δὲ τὰς ἐντὸς κακότη- τας, οἷς ἀναγκαστῶς, ἅτε παρεσπαρμένη τοῖς πόροις, ἡ ψυχὴ συναλγοῦσα τὸν οὐράνιον ποθεῖ καὶ σύμφυ- λον αἰθέρα, καὶ διψᾷ τῆς ἐκεῖσε διαίτης καὶ χορείας ὀριγνωμένη· ὥστε ἡ τοῦ ζῆν ἀπαλλαγὴ κακοῦ τινὸς ἐστίν εἰς ἀγαθὸν μεταβολή.

IV. ΑΖ. Κακὸν οὖν, ὦ Σώκρατες, ἡγούμενος τὸ ζῆν πῶς ἐν αὐτῷ μένεις, καὶ ταῦτα φροντιστὴς ὢν καὶ ὑπὲρ ἡμᾶς τοὺς πολλοὺς τῷ νῷ διαφέρων;

ΣΩ. Ἀξίοχε, σὺ δὲ οὐκ ἔτυμά μοι μαρτυρεῖς, οἷε δὲ καθάπερ Ἀθηναίων ἡ πληθὺς, ἐπειδὴ ζητητικός εἰμι τῶν πραγμάτων, ἐπιστήμονά του εἶναι με. ἐγὼ δὲ εὐξαίμην ἂν τὰ κοινὰ ταῦτα εἰδέναι· τοσοῦτον ἀποδέω τῶν περιττῶν. καὶ ταῦτα δέ, ἃ λέγω, Προ- δίκου ἐστὶ τοῦ σοφοῦ ἀπηχήματα, τὰ μὲν διμοίρου ἐωνημένα, τὰ δὲ δυοῖν δραχμαῖν, τὰ δὲ τετραδράχμου. προῖκα γὰρ ἀνὴρ οὗτος οὐδένα διδάσκει, διὰ παντὸς

δὲ ἔθος ἐστὶν αὐτῷ φωνεῖν τὸ Ἐπιχάρμειον· ἃ δὲ χεῖρ τὰν χεῖρα νίζει· δὸς τι καὶ λάβε τι. καὶ πρώην γοῦν παρὰ Καλλίᾳ τῷ Ἱππονίκου ποιούμενος ἐπίδειξιν τοσάδε τοῦ ζῆν κατεῖπεν, ὥστε ἔγωγε μὲν παρὰ ἀκαρῇ διέγραψα τὸν βίον, καὶ ἐξ ἐκείνου θανατᾶ μου ἡ ψυχὴ, Ἀξίοχε.

ΑΖ. Τίνα δὲ ἦν τὰ λεχθέντα;

Υ. ΣΩ. Φράσαιμι ἂν σοι ταῦτα ἃ μνημονεύσω. ἔφη γάρ, Τί μέρος τῆς ἡλικίας ἄμοιρον τῶν ἀνιαρῶν; οὐ κατὰ μὲν τὴν πρώτην γένεσιν τὸ νήπιον κλαίει, τοῦ ζῆν ἀπὸ λύπης ἀρχόμενον; οὐ λείπεται γοῦν οὐδεμιᾶς ἀλγηδόνης, ἀλλ' ἡ δι' ἔνδειαν ἢ περιψυγμὸν ἢ θάλπος ἢ πληγὴν ὀδυνᾶται, λαλῆσαι μὲν οὐπω δυνάμενον ἃ πάσχει, κλαυθυριζόμενον δὲ καὶ ταύτην τῆς δυσαρεστήσεως μίαν ἔχον φωνήν. ὁπότεν δὲ εἰς τὴν ἐπταετίαν ἀφίκηται πολλοὺς πόνους διαντλήσαν, ἐπέστησαν παιδαγωγοὶ καὶ γραμματισταὶ καὶ παιδοτρίβαι τυραννοῦντες· αὐξομένου δὲ κριτικοί, γεωμέτραι, τακτικοί, πολὺ πλῆθος δεσποτῶν. ἐπειδὴν δὲ εἰς τοὺς ἐφήβους ἐγγραφῇ, κοσμητῆς καὶ φόβος 367] χείρων, ἐπειτα Λύκειον καὶ Ἀκαδημία καὶ γυμνασιαρχία καὶ ῥάβδοι καὶ κακῶν ἀμετρίαι· καὶ πᾶς ὁ τοῦ μειρακίσκου χρόνος ἐστὶν ὑπὸ σωφρονιστὰς καὶ τὴν ἐπὶ τοὺς νέους αἵρεσιν τῆς ἐξ Ἀρείου πάγου βουλῆς. ἐπειδὴν δὲ ἀπολυθῇ τούτων, φροντίδες ἀντικρυς ὑπέδυσαν καὶ διαλογισμοί, τίνα τὴν τοῦ βίου ὁδὸν ἐνστήσεται, καὶ τοῖς ὕστερον χαλεποῖς ἐφάνη τὰ πρῶτα παιδικὰ καὶ νηπίων ὥς ἀληθῶς φόβητρα· στρατεῖαί τε γὰρ καὶ τραύματα καὶ συνεχεῖς ἀγῶνες. εἴτα λαθὼν ὑπῆλθε τὸ γῆρας, εἰς ὃ πᾶν συρρεῖ τὸ τῆς φύσεως ἐπίκηρον καὶ δυσαλθές. καὶ μὴ τις θάττον ὥς χρέος ἀποδιδοῖ τὸ ζῆν, ὥς ὀβολοστάτης ἢ φύσις

ἐπιστᾶσα ἐνεχυράζει τοῦ μὲν ὄψιν, τοῦ δὲ ἀκοήν, πολλάκις δὲ ἄμφω. καὶν ἐπιμείνη τις, παρέλυσεν, ἐλωβήσατο, παρήρθρωσεν. ἀλλ' οἱ πολλοὶ γήρως ἀπακμάζουσι, καὶ τῷ νῷ δις παῖδες οἱ γέροντες γίγνονται.

VI. Διὰ τοῦτο καὶ οἱ θεοὶ τῶν ἀνθρωπείων ἐπιστήμονες, οὓς ἂν περὶ πλείστου ποιῶνται, θάττον ἀπαλλάττουσι τοῦ ζῆν. Ἀγαμήδης γοῦν καὶ Τροφώνιος οἱ δειμάμενοι τὸ Πυθοῖ τοῦ θεοῦ τέμενος, εὐξάμενοι τὸ κράτιστον αὐτοῖς γενέσθαι, κοιμηθέντες οὐκέτ' ἀνέστησαν· οἱ τε τῆς Ἀργείας ἱερείας υἱεῖς, ὁμοίως εὐξαμένης αὐτοῖς τῆς μητρὸς γενέσθαι τι τῆς εὐσεβείας παρὰ τῆς Ἥρας γέρας, ἐπειδὴ τοῦ ζεύγους ὕστερήσαντος ὑποδύντες αὐτοὶ διήνεγκαν αὐτὴν εἰς τὸν νεῶν, μετὰ τὴν εὐχὴν νυκτὶ μετήλλαξαν. μακρὸν ἂν εἴη διεξιέναι τὰ τῶν ποιητῶν, οἱ στόμασι θειοτέροις τὰ περὶ τὸν βίον θεσπιωδοῦσιν, ὥς κατοδύρονται τὸ ζῆν· ἐνὸς δὲ μόνου μνησθήσομαι τοῦ ἀξιολογώτατου, λέγοντος

ὥς γὰρ ἐπεκλώσαντο θεοὶ δειλοῖσι βροτοῖσιν, ζῶειν ἀχνυμένοις,

καὶ

οὐ μὲν γὰρ τί ποτ' ἐστὶν οἷζυρότερον ἀνδρὸς πάντων ὅσσα τε γαῖαν ἐπιπνεῖει τε καὶ ἔρπει.

τὸν δ' Ἀμφιάραον τί φησιν;

[368

τὸν πέρι κῆρι φίλει Ζεὺς τ' αἰγίοχος καὶ Ἀπόλλων

παντοίῃ φιλότῃ· οὐδ' ἴκετο γήραος οὐδόν.

ὁ δὲ κελεύων

τὸν φύντα θρηνεῖν εἰς ὅσ' ἔρχεται κακά, τί σοι φαίνεται; ἀλλὰ παύομαι, μὴ ποτε παρὰ τὴν ὑπόσχεσιν μηκύνω καὶ ἐτέρων μιμνησκόμενος.

VII. Ποίαν δέ τις ἐλόμενος ἐπιτήδευσιν ἢ τέχνην οὐ μέμφεται καὶ τοῖς παροῦσι χαλεπαίνει; τὰς χειρωνακτικὰς ἐπέλθωμεν καὶ βαναύσους πονουμένων ἐκ νυκτὸς εἰς νύκτα καὶ μόλις ποριζομένων τάπιτήδεια, κατοδυρομένων τε ἑαυτοὺς καὶ πᾶσαν ἀγρυπνίαν ἀναπιμπλάντων ὀλοφυρμοῦ καὶ δακρύων; ἀλλὰ τὸν πλωτικὸν καταλεξώμεθα, περαιούμενον διὰ τοσῶνδε κινδύνων καί, ὥς ἀπεφήνατο Βίας, μήτε ἐν τοῖς τεθνηκόσιν ὄντα μήτε ἐν τοῖς βιοῦσιν; ὁ γὰρ ἐπίγειος ἄνθρωπος ὥς ἀμφίβιος αὐτὸν εἰς τὸ πέλαγος ἔρριπεν, ἐπὶ τῇ τύχῃ γενόμενος πᾶς. ἀλλ' ἢ γεωργία γλυκύ; δῆλον. ἀλλ' οὐχ ὅλον, ὥς φασιν, ἔλκος, αἰὲν λύπης πρόφασιν εὐρισκόμενον; κλαῖον νυνὶ μὲν αὐχμόν, νυνὶ δὲ ἐπομβρίας, νυνὶ δὲ ἐπίκασιν, νυνὶ δὲ ἐρυσίβην, νυνὶ δὲ θάλπος ἄκαιρον ἢ κρυμόν; ἀλλ' ἢ πολυτίμητος πολιτεία—πολλὰ γὰρ ὑπερβαίνω—διὰ πόσων ἐλαύνεται δεινῶν; τὴν μὲν χαρὰν ἔχουσα φλεγμονῆς δίκην παλλομένην καὶ σφυγματώδη, τὴν δὲ ἀπότευξιν ἀλγίστην καὶ θανάτων μυρίων χεῖρω. τίς γὰρ ἂν εὐδαιμονήσειε πρὸς ὄχλον ζῶν, εἰ ποππυσθεῖη καὶ κροτηθεῖη δήμου παίγνιον, ἐκβαλλόμενον, συριττόμενον, ζημιούμενον, θνήσκον, ἐλεύμενον· ἐπεὶ τοί γε, Ἀξίοχε πολιτικέ, ποῦ τέθηκε Μιλτιάδης; ποῦ δὲ Θεμιστοκλῆς; ποῦ δ' Ἐφιάλτης; ποῦ δὲ πρῶν οἱ δέκα στρατηγοί; ὅτ' ἐγὼ μὲν οὐκ ἐπηρόμην τὴν γνώμην· οὐ γὰρ ἐφαίνετό μοι σεμνὸν μαινομένῳ δήμῳ συνεχᾶρχειν· οἱ δὲ περὶ Θηραμένην καὶ Καλλίξενον τῇ ὑστεραίᾳ προέδρους ἐγκαθέτους ὑφέντες κατεχειροτόνησαν τῶν ἀνδρῶν ἄκριτον θάνατον. καίτοι γε 369] σὺ μόνος αὐτοῖς ἤμυνες καὶ Εὐρυπτόλεμος, τρισμυρίων ἐκκλησιαζόντων.

VIII. ΑΖ. Ἔστι ταῦτα, ὦ Σώκρατες· καὶ ἔγωγε

ἐξ ἐκείνου ἄλις ἔσχον τοῦ βήματος καὶ χαλεπώτερον οὐδὲν ἐφάνη μοι πολιτείας· δῆλον δὲ τοῖς ἐν τῷ ἔργῳ γενομένοις. σὺ μὲν γὰρ οὕτω λαλεῖς ὥς ἐξ ἀπόπτου θεώμενος, ἡμεῖς δ' ἴσμεν ἀκριβέστερον οἱ διὰ πείρας ἴοντες. δῆμος γάρ, ὦ φίλε Σώκρατες, ἀχάριστον, ἀψίκορον, ὠμόν, βάσκανον, ἀπαίδευτον, ὥς ἂν συνηρανισμένον ἐκ σύγκλυδος ὄχλου καὶ βιαίων φλυάρων. ὁ δὲ τούτῳ προσεταιριζόμενος ἀθλιώτερος μακρῶ.

ΣΩ. Ὅποτε οὖν, ὦ Ἀξίοχε, τὴν ἐλευθεριωτάτην ἐπιστήμην τίθεσαι τῶν λοιπῶν ἀπευκταϊοτάτην, τί τὰς λοιπὰς ἐπιτηδεύσεις ἐννοήσομεν; οὐ φευκτάς; ἤκουσα δὲ ποτε καὶ τοῦ Προδίκου λέγοντος, ὅτι ὁ θάνατος οὔτε περὶ τοὺς ζῶντας ἔστιν οὔτε περὶ τοὺς μετῆλλαχότας.

ΑΖ. Πῶς φῆς, ὦ Σώκρατες;

ΙΧ. ΣΩ. Ὅτι περὶ μὲν τοὺς ζῶντας οὐκ ἔστιν, οἱ δὲ ἀποθανόντες οὐκ εἰσίν. ὥστε οὔτε περὶ σὲ νῦν ἔστιν, οὐ γὰρ τέθηκας, οὔτε εἴ τι πάθοις, ἔσται περὶ σέ· σὺ γὰρ οὐκ ἔσει. μάταιος οὖν ἡ λύπη, περὶ τοῦ μήτε ὄντος μήτε ἔσομένου περὶ Ἀξίοχον Ἀξίοχον ὀδύρεσθαι, καὶ ὁμοιον ὥς εἰ περὶ τῆς Σκύλλης ἢ τοῦ Κενταύρου τις ὀδύροιτο, τῶν μήτε ὄντων νῦν περὶ σὲ μήτε ὕστερον μετὰ τὴν τελευτὴν ἔσομένων. τὸ γὰρ φοβερὸν τοῖς οὐσίν ἐστι· τοῖς δ' οὐκ οὔσι πῶς ἂν εἴη;

ΑΖ. Σὺ μὲν ἐκ τῆς ἐπιπολαζούσης τὰ νῦν λεσχινείας τὰ σοφὰ ταῦτα εἴρηκας· ἐκεῖθεν γὰρ ἔστιν ἢ δεῖ ἢ φλυαρολογία, πρὸς τὰ μειράκια διακεκοσμημένη· ἐμὲ δὲ ἡ στέρησις τῶν ἀγαθῶν τοῦ ζῆν λυπεῖ, κἂν πιθανωτέρους τούτων λόγους τῶν ἄρτι κροτήσης, ὦ Σώκρατες. οὐκ ἐπαίει γὰρ ὁ νοῦς ἀποπλανώμενος εἰς εὐτελείας λόγων, οὐδὲ ἅπτεται ταῦτα τῆς ὁμοχροίας,

ἀλλ' εἰς μὲν πομπὴν καὶ ῥημάτων ἀγλαΐσμον ἀνύτει, τῆς δὲ ἀληθείας ἀποδεῖ· τὰ δὲ παθήματα σοφισμάτων οὐκ ἀνέχεται, μόνοις δὲ ἀρκεῖται τοῖς δυναμένοις καθι-
κέσθαι τῆς ψυχῆς.

370] X. ΣΩ. Συνάπτεις γάρ, ὦ Ἀξίοχε, ἀνεπιλογίστως, τῇ στερήσει τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἀντεισάγων κακῶν αἴσθη-
σιν, ἐκλαθόμενος ὅτι τέθνηκας. λυπεῖ γὰρ τὸν στερό-
μενον τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἢ ἀντιπάθεια τῶν κακῶν, ὃ δ' οὐκ
ὦν οὐδὲ τῆς στερήσεως ἀντιλαμβάνεται· πῶς οὖν ἐπὶ
τῷ μὴ παρέξοντι γινῶσιν τῶν λυπησόντων γένοιτ'
ἂν ἡ λύπη; ἀρχὴν γάρ, ὦ Ἀξίοχε, μὴ συνυποτιθέ-
μενος ἅμῳς γέ πως μίαν αἴσθησιν, κατὰ τὸ ἀνεπιστή-
μον, οὐκ ἂν ποτε πτυρεῖς τὸν θάνατον· νῦν δὲ
περιτρέπεις σεαυτόν, δειματούμενος στερήσεσθαι τῆς
ψυχῆς. τῇ δὲ στερήσει περιτιθεῖς ψυχὴν, καὶ ταρ-
βεῖς μὲν τὸ μὴ αἰσθήσεσθαι, καταλήψεσθαι δὲ οἶει τὴν
οὐκ ἔσομένην αἴσθησιν αἰσθήσει· πρὸς τῷ πολλοῦς
καὶ καλοῦς εἶναι λόγους περὶ τῆς ἀθανασίας τῆς
ψυχῆς. οὐ γὰρ δὴ θνητὴ γε φύσις *οὔσα* τοσόνδ'
ἂν ἦρατο μεγεθουργίας, ὥστε καταφρονῆσαι μὲν
ὑπερβαλλόντων θηρίων βίας, διαπεραιώσασθαι δὲ
πελάγη, δείμασθαι δὲ ἄστυ, καταστήσασθαι δὲ πολι-
τείας, ἀναβλέψαι δὲ εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ ἰδεῖν περι-
φορὰς ἄστρον καὶ δρόμους ἡλίου τε καὶ σελήνης
ἐκλείψεις τε καὶ ταχείας ἀποκαταστάσεις, ἰσημερίας
τε καὶ τροπὰς διττὰς χειμῶνος καὶ θέρους καὶ πλειά-
δων ἀνατολὰς τε καὶ δύσεις ἀνέμους τε καὶ καταφορὰς
ὄμβρων καὶ πρηστήρων ἐξαισίους συρμούς, καὶ τὰ
τοῦ κόσμου παθήματα παραπλήξασθαι πρὸς τὸν
αἰῶνα, εἰ μὴ τι θεῖον ὄντως ἐνῆν πνεῦμα τῇ ψυχῇ,
δι' οὗ τὴν τῶν τηλικῶνδε περίνοιαν καὶ γινῶσιν
ἔσχευ.

XI. Ὅστε οὐκ εἰς θάνατον ἀλλ' εἰς ἀθανασίαν
μεταβαλεῖς, ὦ Ἀξίοχε, οὐδὲ ἀφαίρεσιν ἔξεις τῶν
ἀγαθῶν, ἀλλ' εἰλικρινεστέραν τὴν ἀπόλαυσιν, οὐδὲ
μειγμέναν θνητῷ σώματι τὰς ἡδονάς, ἀλλ' ἀκράτους
ἀπασῶν ἀλγηδόνων. ἐκεῖσε γὰρ ἀφίξει μονωθεὶς ἐκ
τῆσδε τῆς εἰρκτῆς, ἐνθα ἄπωνα πάντα καὶ ἀστένακτα
καὶ ἀγήρατα, γαληνὸς δὲ τις καὶ κακῶν ἄγονος βίος,
ἀσαλεύτῳ ἡσυχίᾳ εὐδιαζόμενος, καὶ περιθρῶν τὴν
φύσιν, φιλοσοφῶν οὐ πρὸς ὄχλον καὶ θέατρον, ἀλλὰ
πρὸς ἀμφιθαλῇ τὴν ἀλήθειαν.

AZ. Εἰς τοῦναντίον με τῷ λόγῳ περιέστακας· οὐκ-
έτι γάρ μοι θανάτου δέος ἐνεστιν, ἀλλ' ἤδη καὶ πόθος,
ἵνα τι κάγῳ μιμησάμενος τοὺς ῥήτορας περιττὸν εἴπω·
κάμπαλιν μετεωρολογῶ καὶ δίειμι τὸν αἶδιον καὶ θεῖον
δρόμον, ἐκ τε τῆς ἀσθενείας ἐμαυτὸν συνείλεγμα καὶ
γέγονα καινός.

XII. ΣΩ. Εἰ δὲ καὶ ἕτερον βούλει λόγον, ὃν ἐμοὶ [371
ἤγγειλε Γωβρύης, ἀνὴρ μάγος· ἔφη κατὰ τὴν Ζέρξου
διάβασιν τὸν πάππον αὐτοῦ καὶ ὁμώνυμον πεμφθέντα
εἰς Δήλον, ὅπως τηρήσειε τὴν νῆσον ἐν ἣ οἱ δύο θεοὶ
ἐγένοντο, ἐκ τινῶν χαλκῶν δέλτων, ἃς ἐξ Ὑπερβο-
ρέων ἐκόμισαν Ὡπίς τε καὶ Ἑκαέργη, ἐκμεμαθηκέναι,
μετὰ τὴν τοῦ σώματος λύσιν τὴν ψυχὴν εἰς τὸν ἄδη-
λον χωρεῖν τόπον κατὰ τὴν ὑπόγειον οἴκησιν, ἐν ἣ
βασίλεια Πλούτωνος οὐχ ἡττω τῆς τοῦ Διὸς αὐλῆς,
ἅτε τῆς μὲν γῆς ἐχούσης τὰ μέσα τοῦ κόσμου, τοῦ δὲ
πόλου ὄντος σφαιροειδοῦς, οὐ τὸ μὲν ἕτερον ἡμι-
σφαίριον θεοὶ ἔλαχον οἱ οὐράνιοι, τὸ δὲ ἕτερον οἱ ὑπέ-
νερθεν, οἱ μὲν ἀδελφοὶ ὄντες, οἱ δὲ ἀδελφῶν παῖδες.
τὰ δὲ πρόπυλα τῆς εἰς Πλούτωνος ὁδοῦ σιδηροῖς
κλείθοις καὶ κλεισὶν ὠχύρωται· ταῦτα δὲ ἀνοίξαντα
ποταμὸς Ἀχέρων ἐκδέχεται, μεθ' ὃν Κωκυτός, οὗς

χρή πορθμεύσαντας ἀχθῆναι ἐπὶ Μίνω καὶ Ῥαδάμανθυν, ὃ κλῆζεται πεδίον ἀληθείας.

XIII. Ἐνταυθοὶ καθέζονται δικασταὶ ἀνακρίνοντες τῶν ἀφικνουμένων ἕκαστον, τίνα βίον βεβίωκε καὶ τίσιν ἐπιτηδεύμασιν ἐνῳκίσθη τῷ σώματι. ψεύσασθαι μὲν οὖν ἀμήχανον. ὅσοις μὲν οὖν ἐν τῷ ζῆν δαίμων ἀγαθὸς ἐπέπνευσεν, εἰς τὸν τῶν εὐσεβῶν χώρον οἰκίζονται, ἔνθα ἄφθονοι μὲν ὥραι παγκάρπου γονῆς βρύουσι, πηγαὶ δὲ ὑδάτων καθαρῶν ῥέουσι, παντοῖοι δὲ λειμῶνες ἄνθεσι ποικίλοις ἐαριζόμενοι, διατριβαὶ δὲ φιλοσόφων καὶ θέατρα ποιητῶν καὶ κύκλιοι χοροὶ καὶ μουσικὰ ἀκούσματα, συμπόσιά τε εὐμελῆ καὶ εἰλαπίναι αὐτοχορήγητοι, καὶ ἀκήρατος ἄλυσία καὶ ἡδεῖα δίαιτα· οὔτε γὰρ χεῖμα σφοδρὸν οὔτε θάλπος ἐγγίγνεται, ἀλλ' εὐκρατος ἀήρ χεῖται ἀπαλαῖς ἡλίου ἀκτῖσιν ἀνακίρνόμενος. ἐνταῦθα τοῖς μεμνημένοις ἐστὶ τις προεδρία· καὶ τὰς ὁσίους ἀγιστείας κάκεισε συντελοῦσι. πῶς οὖν οὐ σοὶ πρῶτῳ μέτεστι τῆς τιμῆς, ὄντι γεννήτῃ τῶν θεῶν; καὶ τοὺς περὶ Ἡρακλέα τε καὶ Διόνυσον κατιόντας εἰς Ἄιδου πρότερον λόγος ἐνθάδε μνηθῆναι, καὶ τὸ θάρσος τῆς ἐκείσε πορείας παρὰ τῆς Ἐλευσινίας ἐναύσασθαι. ὅσοις δὲ τὸ ζῆν διὰ κακουργημάτων ἠλάθη, ἄγονται πρὸς Ἑρινύων ἐπ' ἔρεβος καὶ χάος διὰ ταρτάρου, ἔνθα χῶρος ἀσεβῶν καὶ Δαναίδων ὑδρεῖαι ἀτελεῖς καὶ Ταντάλου δῖφος καὶ

372] Τίτυοῦ σπλάγχνα καὶ Σισύφου πέτρος ἀνήνυτος, οὗ τὰ τέρματα αὐθις ἄρχεται πόνων· ἔνθα θηρσὶ περιλιχμώμενοι καὶ λαμπάσιν ἐπιμόνως πυρούμενοι Ποινῶν καὶ πᾶσαν αἰκίαν αἰκίζόμενοι αἰδίοις τιμωρίαις τρύχονται.

XIV. Ταῦτα μὲν ἐγὼ ἤκουσα παρὰ Γωβρύου, σὺ δ' ἂν ἐπικρίνεις, Ἀξίοχε. ἐγὼ γὰρ λόγῳ ἀνθελκό-

μενος τοῦτο μόνον ἐμπέδως οἶδα, ὅτι ψυχὴ ἅπασα ἀθάνατος, ἢ δὲ ἐκ τοῦδε τοῦ χωρίου μετασταθεῖσα καὶ ἄλυπος· ὥστε ἢ κάτω ἢ ἄνω εὐδαιμονεῖν σε δεῖ, Ἀξίοχε, βεβιωκότα εὐσεβῶς.

ΑΖ. Αἰσχύνομαί σοί τι εἰπεῖν, ὦ Σώκρατες· τοσοῦτον γὰρ ἀποδέω τοῦ δεδοικέναι τὸν θάνατον, ὥστε ἤδη καὶ ἔρωτα αὐτοῦ ἔχειν. οὕτω με καὶ οὗτος ὁ λόγος, ὡς καὶ ὁ οὐράνιος, πέπεικε, καὶ ἤδη περιφρονῶ τοῦ ζῆν, ἅτε εἰς ἀμείνω οἶκον μεταστησόμενος. νυνὶ δὲ ἡρέμα κατ' ἐμαυτὸν ἀναριθμήσομαι τὰ λεχθέντα, ἐκ μεσημβρίας δὲ παρέσει μοι, ὦ Σώκρατες.

ΣΩ. Ποιήσω ὡς λέγεις, κάγῳ δὲ ἐπάνειμι ἐς Κυνόσαργες ἐς περίπατον, ὁπόθεν δεῦρο μετεκλήθην.

TRANSLATION

✻Persons of the Dialogue: SOCRATES, CLEINIAS,
AXIOCHUS.

Scene: Athens.

Dramatic date: 405 B.C.

I WAS GOING OUT TO CYNOSARGES ^[364]
AND HAD JUST GOT TO THE ILISSUS,
WHEN I WAS HAILED BY SOMEONE
shouting, 'Socrates, Socrates!' Turning round to see where
the cry came from I saw the son of Axiochus running towards
Callirrhoe, in company with Damon the musician and Charmides
the son of Glaucon. Of these the one was the other's music-
teacher; the other on terms of intimate friendship, at once lover
and beloved. I resolved to diverge from the straight road and
meet them, that we might most easily be together. But Cleinias,
with tears in his eyes, said, 'You have now, Socrates, a fine
chance of showing that much-talked-of wisdom of yours, for
my father has been suddenly taken ill and is within an ace of
death; he is greatly distressed to think the end is near, though
up till now he would mock those who were scared of death and
poke fun at them in a gentle fashion. Pray, then, come and
console him in your accustomed way, that he may face destiny
without a groan and that I may pay him this final act of filial
duty.'

'I shall not fail in any reasonable request, Cleinias,' I said,
'and that, too, as you are urging me to do a pious act. Anyway,
let us make haste; for, if your father is in this state, speed is
essential.'

Cleinias. 'The mere sight of you, Socrates, will ease him,
for often before he has had an attack and recovered.'

365] As we were hurrying along the road by the wall, at the Itonian Gates—for his home was close there, by the Amazonian Pillar—we found Axiochus already rallied, physically, and strengthened in body; but he was sick in mind, in serious need of consolation, and constantly fetching a deep breath and uttering lamentations with tears and beating of hands. As soon as I caught sight of him I said, 'What means this, Axiochus? where are your former vaunts, those perpetual praises of Virtue, and your hitherto unbroken courage? Like a cowardly wrestler, you show yourself brave enough in the wrestling-school, but fail when it comes to the contest. Will you not carefully consider the nature of things—you, a man of your years and amenable to argument, and an Athenian too, if nothing else? Why surely it is a familiar enough commonplace that life is a sojourning, and that, passing our time reasonably, we should courageously face destiny with all-but a song of triumph? But to be so faint-hearted and reluctant to be torn from life, this is childish and ill-suited to years of discretion.'

Axiochus. 'True enough, Socrates: I think you are right. Yet somehow, when one gets close to the grim reality, these clever and stout arguments evaporate imperceptibly and are disdained. I am haunted by a fear which wounds the mind in various ways—the fear, I mean, of being deprived of the daylight and its blessings; the fear of lying, unseen, unheard, in a state of corruption, changing to worms and horrors like that.'

[Socrates. 'You are thoughtlessly connecting sensation with absence of sensation, Axiochus, and are acting and speaking inconsistently. You fail to reflect that, at one and the same time, you bewail the absence of sensation, and are distressed at the thought of corruption and the loss of pleasures; just as if, at the point of death, you were about to enter upon a different existence instead of lapsing into utter insensibility, such as was yours before

birth. As in the days of Draco and Cleisthenes no mischief befell you—for then you did not exist—so will it be after death, because you will be non-existent. Away then with all this nonsense, remembering that, once the union of soul and body is dissolved, and the soul established in its rightful place, the body that is left, being earthly and irrational, is not the man himself.

U 'For we are indeed soul, an immortal creature locked in a mortal prison; and this our earthly tabernacle Nature has tacked on to us—to our sorrow; its pleasures are surface pleasures; they take wing and are mingled with much anguish; but its sorrows are unmixed and lasting, and have no share in pleasure. Moreover the soul, suffering perforce with the organs of sense—their diseases, their fevers and the mischiefs that are within—(seeing that it is disseminated through the manifold ducts of the body), is all the while yearning for its native heavenly air, for ever reaching out towards life there, and for the choral dances. On this ground departure from this life is really a change from evil to good.'

Ax. 'Seeing that you regard life here as an evil, Socrates, why remain in it? and that, too, when you are a genuine thinker, far above us, the majority, in intelligence.'

Socr. 'Your witness, in my case, is untrue; your opinion is that of most of your fellow-citizens, for you think that, because I am an explorer of facts, I am really cognisant of something. I could well desire to know ordinary things, so lacking am I in knowledge of what is out of the common. Now what I tell you consists of echoes of the wise Prodicus, purchased some for sixpence, some for a shilling, some for more; because this great man teaches no one gratis: he is fond of quoting the dictum of Epicharmus, "hand washes hand". At any rate the other day when giving a declamation at the house of Callias, son of Hipponicus, he spoke so vehemently against "living" that I

pretty nearly ran my pen through the word "life"; and ever since my soul has craved for death.²

Ax. 'What were his words?'

Socr. 'I'll tell you what I recollect: it was to this effect.
✓ (What portion of life is without its share in distress? Does not the babe cry out at birth, beginning life with grief? The child lacks nothing in the way of suffering, but is tormented with want, or cold, or heat, or blows, unable as yet to talk of its pain; it can but weep, for it has no other way to express its discontent. At the age of seven, after endurance of manifold troubles, the growing boy is made subject to tutors, elementary teachers, and drill-masters; later on composition-masters, mathematicians, military instructors lord it over him—a goodly host, indeed. Once he is enrolled among the cadets, along comes a director, and fear of chastisement; this is followed by the Lyceum and the Academy,
367] officers of the Gymnasium with their staves, and a multitude of evils.

'And the entire period of his youth is passed under Superintendents and the Committee appointed by the Council of the Areopagus to deal with the young. As soon as he is released from this, at once cares secretly beset him, and he will be compelled to consider his future career. Compared with these later difficulties those of his early years will seem trivial—mere bugbears of childhood. I am referring to campaigns, for example, wounds and endless contests. Finally old age creeps upon him unawares; and into this flows all that is subject to death and is without remedy. And unless a man surrenders his life, like a debt, in time, Nature, like some petty money-lender, stands near and exacts a pledge—from this man eyesight, from another hearing, and often both. Should he hold on, she afflicts him with palsy, mutilation, dislocation of a limb. Some, in old age, are still in full vigour, bodily; in mind they undergo a second child-

hood. That is why the gods, who take heed of human affairs, are quick to release from life those whom they reckon of the highest worth. For instance: Agamedes and Trophonius, who built the temple precincts of the god at Delphi, after praying that the best might befall them, sank to sleep and never woke again. We have a further example in the story of the Argive priestess and her two sons. The mother sought a blessing for them from Hera, to reward their filial piety; for when the yoke of mules, which was to take the priestess to the temple, arrived too late, the sons harnessed themselves to the chariot and drew it to the appointed place. On the night following the mother's prayer they died.

'It would be a lengthy business to go through the works of the poets who, with diviner lips, tell in prophetic strains of the things of life, deploring the act of living. I shall call to mind one poet only, the most memorable of them all, Homer, when he says:

◀ "This lot the gods have spun for wretched men,
That they should live in pain."

Or again:

◀ "Nothing, I deem, more piteous is than man
Of all that breathe and creep upon the earth."

What says he of Amphiaraus?

[368

"Beloved of Zeus the shielded, beloved of Apollo he was
With manifold love; yet never the threshold of Eld did he
pass."*

And what think you of Euripides, who bids us

"Mourn for the ills that wait the new-born babe"?

* These two lines are taken from William Morris' translation of the *Odyssey*.

But I cease, that I may not break my word and lengthen the list by recalling other instances.

'What pursuit or art can a man choose that he will not find fault with it, grumbling at his lot? Shall we approach craftsmen and artisans, who work from night to night hardly able to provide for their needs, lamenting themselves and filling their waking hours with sighs and with tears? shall we speak of the life led by mariners as they pass through many perils—a life which, as Bias showed, is among neither the quick nor dead? for a terrestrial creature, man, casts himself upon the sea as though he were an amphibian, entirely at the mercy of Chance.'

'But farming—surely that is a pleasant occupation. Clearly; yet is it not (as the saying goes) "a sore and naught else", for ever discovering some excuse for misery, the farmer bewailing—now a drought, now torrential rains, now blight, now extreme heat or frost? What about highly-prized statecraft (I pass over many excellent things, as you see)? Through what perils is it driven! its very joy, on the one hand, is like a throbbing palpitating fever; on the other hand failure is worse than a thousand deaths. For who could be fortunate, living for the mob? To-day flattered and applauded, a popular plaything; to-morrow flung aside, fined, hissed off the stage, to be put to death—an object of pity. Tell me, my statesman friend, what was the end of Miltiades, of Themistocles, of Ephialtes, or of the ten commanders in recent times? I never put the question to the vote, for it seemed to me degrading to join in leading a maddened throng. Next day Theramenes and Callixenus, having surreptitiously suborned Presidents of the meeting, secured a death sentence 369] *against the Ten without any trial. Yet you and Euryptolemus alone tried to defend them, though thirty thousand citizens were at the Assembly.'*

Ax. 'That is so, Socrates; since then I have had enough

of the platform, finding nothing more distasteful than statecraft. This is plain enough to those engaged in that business. You indeed speak as an onlooker, from a distance, but we, who have practical experience, have a sounder knowledge. For the mob, my dear Socrates, is ungrateful, fickle, cruel, malignant and uneducated—naturally, seeing that it is the chance sweepings of a rabble of brawlers. But the man who plays up to such creatures is more miserable by far.'

Socr. 'Since, then, you count the gentleman's craft par excellence as so abominable, what notion shall we entertain about life's other pursuits? ought we not to avoid them? I once heard Prodicus asserting that death concerns neither the living nor those that have changed their condition.'

Ax. 'How do you mean, Socrates?'

Socr. 'That, as regards the living, death exists not, while the dead are non-existent. Consequently, as far as you are concerned, death does not exist now (for you are not dead); nor, should death befall you, will it exist as regards you, because you will not exist. Vain, therefore, is the sorrow of Axiochus for that which neither exists nor will exist for Axiochus: it is like mourning for Scylla or the Centaur who—as far as you are concerned—neither exist now nor will exist after your death. An object of fear is an object of fear to the living; how could it be so to the non-existent?'

Ax. 'What inspires you with all these fine phrases is the fashionable chatter of the time; that's the source of this twaddle—concocted for the use of striplings! What hurts me is being robbed of life's good things, even though you hammer out arguments more plausible than your present ones. My mind turns a deaf ear to the beguilements of your talk; such reasonings do not touch even the surface, but result in a pompous parade and splendour of words, but are miles away from the truth. Suffering

is intolerant of the tricks of sophistry, and nought avails it save those things which alone strike home to the soul.'

370] Socr. 'Your argument is at fault, Axiochus, in linking perception of evils with deprivation of goods: forgetting that you are dead! What pains him who finds himself deprived of good is suffering evil in its place; but a person that exists not is unconscious even of the deprivation. How could there be pain for what will yield no sensation of the things that will cause pain? Had you, to start with, not taken it for granted that, in some sort of fashion, the dead are conscious of sensation, you would not, ignorantly, be alarmed at death. But, as it is, you upset yourself, dreading to be deprived of your soul, while you ascribe to that privation a soul of its own. On the one hand you shrink from the absence of all sensation, while on the other you believe in a sensibility which will enable you to feel that you feel nothing! And besides all this think of the many admirable arguments for the soul's immortality. Surely mortal nature would never rise to such a height of noble daring as to scorn the violence of wild beasts far surpassing man in strength, to traverse oceans, to build cities, to found commonwealths, to gaze up to heaven and discern the revolutions of the stars, the risings settings and eclipses of sun and moon, their swift return, the procession of the Equinoxes, the rise and fall of the Pleiades, storms of autumn and winds of summer, sudden onrush of hurricanes; to chart for the future cosmic events: were there not actually some divine breath in man's soul, whereby it obtained knowledge and intelligence of matters so great? Hence, my dear Axiochus, you will suffer a change not into death but immortality; nor will you be deprived of your good things but have a purer enjoyment of them, your pleasures no longer mingled with a mortal body but rather unmingled with any pains. For, set free from this prison-house, you will come to a land where there is no more labour, nor mourning, nor old

age; where life is tranquil, with no taste of ill but enjoying an unruffled peace; where, as you survey Nature, you may play the philosopher not in the presence of a mob and a crowd of onlookers but in the presence of Truth, flourishing on every side.'

Ax. 'By your reasonings you have brought me round to a different point of view. No longer am I haunted by fear of death; nay, I already desire it, if, like the rhetoricians, I may indulge in hyperboles. I seem long to have contemplated that heavenly scene, and to have been passing through that divine and eternal course; and now I am recovered from my weakness and become a new man.'

Socr. 'If you like, I shall offer you a second discourse told [371] me by one Gobryes, a Persian sage. He said that, at the time of Xerxes' crossing over into Greece, his grandfather (who bore the same name as himself) was sent to Delos to guard the island where the Two Deities were born. From certain bronze tablets, brought by Opis and Hecaege from the Hyperboreans, he had learned that, after its departure from the body, the soul journeyed to that dwelling-place beneath the earth where lies Pluto's palace (extensive as that of Zeus), in that the earth occupies the centre of the Universe, the heaven itself being in the form of a sphere. One half of this sphere fell to the lot of the heavenly gods, the other half to that of the nether gods—some of them brothers, others the children of brothers. Now the gateways of the road to Pluto's palace are fast bound with iron bolts and keys. On the gates being opened, the river Acheron confronts the pilgrim; after that, the Cocytus; and, after being ferried across, the voyagers must needs be brought to Minos and Rhadamanthus. Here is what is called the Plain of Truth. In this sit Judges who, by a searching examination, inquire what sort of life each new-comer has spent and what were his pursuits while in the body. Falsehood is impossible. Those who, during their life-

time, have been inspired by a good angel, are assigned an abode in the land of the righteous where, without grudging, the seasons are rich in fruitful produce, where flow streams of pure water, and where all manner of meadows bloom with flowers of divers colours. Here are to be seen philosophers discoursing, cyclic choruses and dramatic rehearsals, amid strains of music, pleasant banquets, and self-furnished feasts; here, too, there is perfect freedom from pain, together with a life that is all sweetness. No fierce cold nor heat is found there, but a mild and equable climate is spread abroad, tempered by the soft rays of the sun. Here the Initiated have place of honour, and here they fulfil their holy rites. Will you not, therefore, be among the foremost to share this privilege, seeing that you yourself are one of the Children of Heaven?

‘There is a legend that Heracles and Dionysus, when about to descend into the lower world, were previously initiated here, in Athens, and for their journey took courage from the Eleusinian goddess. Those whose lives have been passed in sin are driven by the Furies to Erebus and Chaos, through Tartarus, where are the dwellings of the wicked: the daughters of Danaus for ever drawing water, Tantalus with his thirst, Tityus with his en-
 372] trails everlastingly torn and Sisyphus with his unaccomplished stone, for whom

“the labour’s end begins his toil anew”.

‘Here too are to be found those who, mouthed by wild beasts and set on fire by the torches of the Avengers, are for ever put to a perpetual shame, and worn out by everlasting punishments.

‘Such is the story I heard from Gobryes; it is for you to decide about it, Axiochus. For my own part, led by Reason, I know this alone for a certainty: that every soul is immortal, and that, when withdrawn from its present seat, it is free from

pain. So, whether here or there, you must needs be happy, if you have lived righteously.’

Ax. ‘I am ashamed to say anything to you, Socrates. Far from fearing death, I am now in love with it: so much has this discourse, as also the one about the heavens, convinced me. Already I condemn life, inasmuch as I am about to move to some better home. And now quietly, by myself, I shall reckon up all that has been said. Pray meet me again, Socrates, after noonday.’

Socr. ‘Well, be it so. I shall return to Cynosarges, for a stroll. It was thence that I was summoned here.’

Notes on the *AXIOCHUS*

The *Axiochus* appears in many editions of Plato as part of the Platonic Corpus, but it cannot be Plato's work.* Rather it is an example of Platonic dialogue like the *Eryxias* or the *Second Alcibiades*, and may be reasonably assigned to the second or third generation after Plato, when his writings were well known at Athens and Alexandria. It comprises a cento of rather contradictory ideas, Orphic, Platonic, Epicurean; Rohde speaks of it as a carelessly composed pamphlet, consisting of the conventional ingredients of the usual 'παραμυθητικοὶ λόγοι'.† We are unable to fix its date of composition, but its dramatic date is settled by a reference to the trial of the Ten Generals after Arginusae in 405 B.C. But, as Taylor points out, the writer has overlooked the fact that Axiochus himself was condemned to death ten years previously for his part in the scandals of 415. The dialogue may have been intended, in part, like the Apocryphal *Book of Wisdom* at a much later period, as a protest against the teachings of Epicurus which were the vogue at Athens somewhere between 300 and 270. Now in the latter year Epicurus died, and it is conceivable that this pamphlet was put forward—in imitation of the Master's own dialogues—by some younger member of the Platonic circle not long after the death of Epicurus. It reads not unlike a University prize essay of our own day. Some writers have, on linguistic and other grounds, put the date of composition very much later; certainly it is full of non-Attic words and phrases. Some of these may be due to the fact that the author was no great stylist; but this throws little light on the date itself; in such cases (as Prof. A. E. Taylor observes) linguistic considerations do not take us far. As for the text generally, it appears defective in places: see Gomperz, *Greek Thinkers* (E.T.), I, 583, who believes that the treatise dates from post-Alexandrian times.

The Orphic character of the dialogue is undeniable. Orphism, the harbinger of the Mystery religions in the Hellenic world, was a way of salvation—revivalism in Greek religion, in fact—the influence of which was widely felt. Indeed the Mystery cults, the secret of which was kept inviolably secret from all but Initiates, was the great feature of antiquity. Orphism introduced a new conception, the conviction of sin, which could be got rid of only through purgations and initiation into holy rites. The Orphist, believing in the life to come, with rewards and penalties dependent on conduct here and now, and attaching the highest importance to the Great Mysteries, held that

* It is among the spurious dialogues (νοθεύμενοι) in the list given by Diogenes Laertius (iii, 62).

† For such 'consolatory addresses' see Lecky, *History of European Morals*, I, 204; and Summers, Introduction to Seneca's 63rd Letter. There is a famous one in Plutarch.

initiation into those Mysteries was a passport to heaven; for the uninitiated there was no hope, only endless sorrow in a murky underworld. Orphism was naturally in sharp contrast with Epicureanism, with its materialistic creed in which there was no room for 'other-worldliness', seeing that death meant the end of everything for a man. Consequently Orphism—mainly, as already implied, a republication of primitive religious sentiment—made a strong appeal to all who felt dissatisfied with the popular theologies; it offered to the disquieted soul some hope of deliverance, a regeneration of life, the vision of some better world that should redress the balance of the old. And this was accomplished through sacramental grace administered through preparatory rituals. The esoteric doctrine was to be followed by asceticism of conduct. Hence, despite many grave defects, its subsequent importance. One of the most interesting sections of the dialogue is the mythical description of the future awaiting the righteous and the unrighteous after death. Readers will do well to compare it with the corresponding descriptions in the *Gorgias* and the *Republic*: the inference from all three is, to all intents, the same (see Stewart, *Myths of Plato*, especially pp. 60–71).

As it is (I believe) unnecessary to assign to the composition of the *Axiarchus* so late a date as the first century B.C. (as many have done), we need not suppose the Orphic-Pythagorean elements in it as evidence of neo-Pythagoreanism.*

364] CYNOSARGES. A gymnasium or training-school, consecrated to Heracles, outside the city and reserved for people of doubtful citizenship. It was here that Antisthenes, a member of the Socratic circle and subsequently founder of the Cynic School, was accustomed to teach: Diog. Laert. vi, 1–19.

ILISSUS. The Ilissus is a small stream flowing on the south side of Athens.

CALLIRHOE. The famous fountain (later Enneacrounos).

DAMON. Tutor of Peticles, famed for his wisdom as well as his skill in metric and music: Plat. *Rep.* 400.

CHARMIDES. Plato's maternal uncle, and one of the handsomest youths of his day. He gives his name to one of his nephew's dialogues. (Prof. Taylor points out that Damon, a contemporary of Anaxagoras, would have been almost a centenarian had he been alive at the supposed date of the *Axiarchus*, i.e. not earlier than 405.)

MUSIC-TEACHER. The word 'music' in Plato (like 'gymnastic') has a wider scope than in English. In the *Crito* 'to train in music and gymnastic' implies a well-balanced all-round education.

* See Taylor, *Plato*. For further information on Orphism and the Mystery cults see Gowen, *A History of Religion*, chap. xviii; Angus, *The Mystery Religions*, iv, v; Adam, *Religious Teachers of Greece*, pp. 94–114; Dill, *Roman Society*, iv, ii; Lewis Campbell, *Religion in Greek Literature*, pp. 245 f.; J. R. Watmough, *Orphism* (a brief but interesting volume), and Cheetham, *The Mysteries Pagan and Christian*.

LOVER AND BELOVED. Admirer and admired. These romantic attachments were a feature of Athenian society. A commentary on these two words will be found in 1 *Alcib.* 131, and in Jowett's introductions to the *Phaedrus* and the *Symposium*. Cf. Lecky, *Hist. Europ. Morals*, vol. II, chap. 5. Plutarch has some brief but prudent remarks in his tractate on Education. Cf. also Xenophon, *Symposium*, viii.

TALKED-OF WISDOM. Socrates himself disclaimed any title to wisdom, professing to be an enquirer. Unfitted to be the founder of a complete system of philosophy, he aimed at a theory of knowledge that could withstand criticism. This he hoped to achieve by the method of discussion.

ATTACK (σύμπτωμα). Probably he was subject to epileptic fits.

THE MERE SIGHT OF YOU. Cf. Burton, *Anatomy of Melancholy*, II, i, 4 (2).

ITONIAN GATES. 'Itonian' Athena had a sanctuary in Boeotia, another [365] in Thessaly. Doubtless she had a shrine in Athens. The στήλη, marking the grave of the Amazon, Antiope, was just inside the city wall.

FETCHING A DEEP BREATH (or sigh): ἀναφερόμενον. Note that the μέν . . . δὲ divide it sharply from the symptoms of returning health and connect it with those of spiritual weakness (H. J. Rose).

TEARS . . . HANDS. Cf. the words in the Salamis chorus, Soph. *Ajax*, 631.

YOUR FORMER VAUNTS. Burton, *l.c.* I, ii, 4 (7); Sirach, xli, 1. 'Timor mortis morte peior.'

A SOJOURNING (παρεπιδημία). Cf. Marc. Aurel. II, 17 'life is a warfare and a sojourning in a far country'; Cic. *de Senect.* 23 'I quit life as if it were an inn, not a home'. Cicero ends his *de re publica* with a vision of the other world where the righteous dwell. This eschatological passage became justly famous. For examples in the Bible, see Ps. xxxix, 12; Hebr. xi, 13, xiii, 14; 1 Pet. ii, 11 (Hort). The words of Theodoret are worth quoting: παρούσα ζωὴ παροικία ἐστίν, ἐν γὰρ αὐτῇ παροικοῦμεν οὐ κατοικοῦμεν.

SONG OF TRIUMPH. Cf. Cic. *Tusc. D.* I, § 118: when God wills us to depart from life 'let us obey cheerfully and thankfully, considering that we are being loosed from a prison-house'. Euripides, frag. of the *Cresphontes*:

'Now we forgather to bewail the babe
That, newly born, begins this life of sorrow;
But, for the dead, whose troubles have an end,
With triumph-song we waft him to his rest.'

Browning's *Prospice* has something akin to this; see too his last poem with its 'Greet the unseen with a cheer'.

DISDAINED. 'It all sounds fine, but when one is face to face with death it proves idle bravado' (A. E. Taylor). Cf. *infra*, 369, and 1 Cor. xv, 26.

HAUNTED BY A FEAR. 'Le présent est affreux s'il n'est point d'avenir, | si la nuit du tombeau détruit l'être qui pense' (Voltaire). The somewhat crude scepticism of early days is apt to be modified in maturer life; the approach of death makes all the difference, as Cephalus justly remarks in Plato's *Republic*, 330—a passage well worth comparing.

DEPRIVED OF...ITS BLESSINGS. Cic. *Tusc. D.* II, iv, § 10 'interdum objiciebatur animo metus quidam et dolor cogitanti fore aliquando finem hujus lucis et amissionem omnium vitae commodorum' (a passage closely akin to the words in the *Axiarchus*). Cf. Seneca, *Ep.* LXXXII, the theme of which is that fear of death is a natural instinct, not to be countered by syllogisms (*interrogationes*).

DAYLIGHT. It was the thought of man's dark destiny that prompted this love of the light which is so prominent in Greek writers. One may recall the noble outburst in the *Iliad* (xvii, 647): 'Slay us—so it be in the light'. See the dying farewell of Ajax in Soph. *Ajax*, 854 f., and also Eccles. xi, 7, 8.

UNSEEN, UNHEARD. An echo of Hom. *Od.* I, 242.

✓ ABSENCE OF SENSATION. There is a striking resemblance to this passage in Epicurus' letter to Menoeceus in Diog. Laert. x, 124. That death means a state similar to that wherein we were previous to birth is familiar doctrine: Lucr. III, 832 f., 972/3, who is borrowing from Epicurus. Seneca often dwells on this thought, and there are some interesting chapters on the subject in the first book of Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations*. 'Life may concern us, death not; for in death we can neither act nor reason; we neither can persuade nor command; and our statues are worth more than we are, let them be but wax' (Landor, *Imaginary Conversations*). Cf. Montaigne, *Essays*, I, 19; Lecky, *Hist. Europ. Morals*, I, 204 (ed. 1894).

CORRUPTION. The best comment is in Shakespeare, *M. for M.* III, i, 118 (Claudio's speech):

'Ay, but to die and go we know not where,
To lie in cold obstruction and to rot.'

DRACO. Athenian legislator (seventh century B.C.), famed for the extreme severity of his code: hence our 'draconic'.

CLEISTHENES. An early sixth-century reformer of the political constitution of Athens. See Grote, *Hist. Greece*, and [Aristotle] *On the Constitution*.

For the argument here see Lucr. III referred to above; but note that the Epicurean theory is that the soul perished with the body; Socrates held a very different view. Here are Epicurus' own words: 'Death, the most dreadful of evils, is really nothing to us; for, while we are here, death is not, and when death is here we are not. So death matters neither to the living nor to the dead.' Cf. Plutarch's comments in his *non posse suaviter vivi secundum Epicurum*, chap. 25.

UNION...DISSOLVED. Plat. *Phaed.* 70.

NOT THE MAN. So Lactantius (*Inst. Div.* II, iii, 8): 'hoc quod oculis subiectum est non homo sed hominis receptaculum'. Ib. *de opif. Dei*, I, 11. Cf. Cic. *Tusc. D.* I, xxii; Plat. *Phaed.* 64; Xen. *Cyr.* VIII, 7, 17 f.

SOUL...PRISON. The famous Pythagorean doctrine (σῶμα, σῆμα), taken over by Plato (*Phaed.* 62, 82; *Gorg.* 493). It passed into Alexandrian philosophy, and was held by Stoics: Marc. Aurel. iv, 41. Cf. the words of a well-known hymn 'Here in the body pent'; the lines in Wordsworth's *Ode on Immortality*; Waller's phrase 'The soul's dark cottage', a phrase that might well have been derived from a saying of the sophist Gorgias in extreme old age: 'Take my departure as from a lodging ruinous and decayed' (ἐκ σαπροῦ καὶ ρέοντος συνοικίου). Similarly Dryden's 'the tenement of clay' (*Absalom and Achitophel*); Browning's *Pauline*, 'I cannot chain my soul; it will not rest | In its clay prison, this most narrow sphere'. With the whole of *Ax.* 365, 370 compare the speech of Eleazar to the Sicarii (in Josephus, *Wars*, VII, 8) on the soul's immortality and on Death as the deliverer. The thought and diction are curiously reminiscent of our dialogue.*

EARTHLY TABERNACLE. The words of St Paul will occur to anyone, 2 Cor. v, 1, 4, where there is the same metaphor of a tent (σκήνος). Cf. *Phaed.* 81 and *Wisdom* ix, 15; [Longinus] *On the Sublime*, xxxii, 5; Plato quoted by Clem. Alex. *Strom.* v; and this in a dialogue of Aeschines† the Socratic: 'we are a soul, an immortal being, shut up in a mortal case; but this *tabernacle* Nature has joined to evil'. Still more striking is a passage in Eurysus the Pythagorean: 'the *tabernacle* of man is like that of other creatures, and of the same matter; but it was constructed by a perfect Architect who framed it after the pattern of Himself'.

SURFACE PLEASURES. *Wisdom* v, 8-13. In the next paragraph, there seems to be some dislocation in the Greek.

DISSEMINATED. Cf. *Ep. to Diognetus*, vi, ἑσπαρται κατὰ πάντων τῶν τοῦ σώματος μελῶν ἡ ψυχὴ.

NATIVE...AIR. As the soul comes from God, it longs to return to Him, 'who is our home' (Wordsworth). We are a heavenly, not an earthly, plant, says Plato in the *Timaeus*. There is a beautiful passage in Dio Chrysostom, which deserves a passing notice: 'All men have an irresistible love for the divine. We are just like children snatched away from their parents; and possessed with a strange desire they oftentimes stretch out their hands to them in their dreams. Even so we also, rightly loving God for His goodness and

* The student should not overlook the passage in the *Cratylus*, 400, nor the words in Cicero, *Somn. Scip.* § 6.

† For Aeschines see Gomperz, *Greek Thinkers*, III, 342; Diog. Laert. II, 60; Taylor, *Philos. Studies*, chap. i.

kinship with us, desire above all things to be with Him where He is.' Which reminds one of the immortal words of Augustine, at the opening of the *Confessions*: 'Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our hearts can find no rest till they rest in Thee.' Cf. the *Imitatio* of Thomas à Kempis, III, xxi, 1. We may well contrast the language of the elder Pliny (*N.H.* VII, 188-191) who scoffs at the doctrine of personal immortality as no better than a nursery tale.

CHANGE... TO GOOD. Read the noble words with which Socrates closes the *Apology*, and cf. Rom. viii, 21; 2 Tim. iv, 18; Phil. i, 21-23. 'There is no death: what seems so is transition' (Longfellow).

WHY REMAIN IN IT? Socrates disallowed suicide: *Phaed.* 61, 2. Cf. also the *Laws*, 873; Cic. *de Senect.* 73. Burton (*Anat. of M.* I, iv, 1) has a wealth of references on this subject, though he makes no mention of the words in *Hamlet*, I, ii, 132 (the Everlasting's) 'canon 'gainst self-slaughter', or *Cymbeline*, III, iv, 78 'Against self-slaughter | There is a prohibition so divine.' The O.T. nowhere explicitly forbids suicide, but as murder in all forms is forbidden, suicide is doubtless included. The Stoics advocated it, dignifying the act as ἐξοργωγή (= ushering oneself out of life): cf. Diog. Laert. VII, 66. Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius offer no objections, but Aristotle (*Eth.* III, 7) describes suicide as a coward's refuge. See Cicero, *de Off.* I, xxxi for a casuistic discussion on the subject, and a rather noteworthy passage in Athenaeus IV, xlv, 157. Nor should the words of Cicero, *Somn. Scip.* § 7 be forgotten.

PRODICUS of Ceos. A celebrated Sophist (see Gomperz, *Greek Thinkers*, I, 425 f.). He is mentioned by Plato both in the *Protagoras* and the *Meno*, as well as in the *Cratylus*, where he is spoken of as a sort of 'fifty shilling lecturer' when he gave a series of discourses, and a 'half crown lecturer' if he gave one. The Allegory, on the Choice of Hercules, attributed to him, is universally known; it is preserved for us in Xen. *Mem.* II, i, 21-34. (See Appendix III in my edition of Plato's *Apology*, pp. 191-195.) More about Prodicus in Rohde, *Psyche*, p. 456, in reference to this passage.

EPICHRMUS. A Pythagorean philosopher as well as a poet. This saying of his appears in a comedy of Menander; cf. Petronius, 45 'manus manum lavat'. 'You scratch my back, I'll scratch yours', we say. So 'do ut des', the provenance of which I cannot trace.

DECLAMATION (ἐπιδείξις). A show-speech, to exhibit literary skill.

CALLIAS. It is at the house of this wealthy patron of the Sophists and their disciples that the scene of Xenophon's *Symposium* and of Plato's *Protagoras* is laid. Cf. Rogers on Aristotle. *Birds*, 283.

BABE CRY. Shakespeare, *Lear*, IV, vi, 180 'We came crying hither' etc. A similar idea in Lucr. V, 226 (Munro), II, 577 'vago | quem pueri tollunt visentis luminis oras'; *Wisdom* VII, 3. Imitated by Tennyson, *Lucretius*: 'And

here he glances on an eye new-born | And gets for greeting but a wail of pain.'

AGE OF SEVEN. Plato, *Laws*, 794, says six. Cf. Aristotle. *Pol.* 1336-1339, who gives the age as five. But we have no record of a boy of seven going to the *palaestra*. Probably the author of the *Axiochus* is not really implying that this was so; he appears to mean not that these tutors and trainers all attend to the boy at once, but that, from seven on, he may expect their attentions sooner or later. The whole passage here is rather loosely expressed.

TUTORS (παιδαγωγοί). Not in our sense, but rather 'attendants' (generally slaves).

TEACHERS (γραμματισταί). Instructors in reading, especially Homer, and in writing. *Euthydemus*, 279.

COMPOSITION-MASTERS (κριτικοί). Or rather 'professors of criticism', specially of poetry. On education in Greece refer to Freeman's *Schools of Hellas* and Sandys, *Hist. Class. Schol.* I, p. 10.

CADETS (ἐφηβοί). A term applied to youths of about eighteen, one of whose main duties was to act on garrison duty: see especially Lycurgus, in *Leocr.* § 76.

DIRECTOR, or chancellor (κοσμητής). Mentioned in an inscription at the close of the third century: Sandys on [Aristotle] *Constitution of Athens*, XIII, 2.

LYCEUM. A public palaestra or wrestling-school; later the resort of Aristotle.

ACADEMY. From this alone it seems clear that the *Axiochus* was written after the death of Plato (346 B.C.) when his successors occupied the School their master had founded.

AREOPAGUS. It was before the Council of the Areopagus that Paul was brought (Acts xvii, 19), probably to find out whether he was qualified to lecture, or was a mere quack or disturber of the peace. For this judicial assembly of Elders see *Camb. Ancient Hist.* vol. V, [Aristotle] on the *Constitution*. [367]

SECOND CHILDHOOD. Plaut. *Merc.* II, ii, 24. Lucian in his *Saturnalia* quotes the proverb 'old men twice boys' which occurs in the *Clouds* of Aristophanes. Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, II, vii, 163 'Last scene of all... Is second childishness'. See Plato's *Laws* 646 and Soph. frag. of the *Peleus*, 487 (Pearson).

OF THE HIGHEST WORTH. There was a well-known saw 'whom the gods love die young', which has a long and distinguished pedigree from Menander to Byron.

The story of AGAMEDES and TROPHONIUS is told by Cicero in *Tusc. D.* I, § 114 (though with a slight difference) as well as by Plutarch in his *Consolatio ad Apoll.* 14. The sons of the Argive priestess (viz. Cydippe) were Cleobis and Biton, as Herodotus (I, 31) informs us: see Cic. *l.c.* § 113, and Frazer on Pausanias, II, xx.

HOMER. The first quotation is from *Iliad*, xxiv; the second from *Iliad*, xvii; the third from *Odyssey*, xv. Just above, for DEPLORING THE ACT OF LIVING, cf. Soph. *frag.* 488, 952 (Pearson); Plutarch, *Consolatio ad Apoll.*

368] AMPHIARAUS. One of the heroes of the Seven against Thebes: see Seyffert, *Dict. of Class. Antiquities*. The final quotation is from a lost tragedy, the *Cresphontes*; it is translated by Cicero in *Tusc. D.* i, § 115.

WHAT PURSUIT. The world is a place of discontent and disillusionment—'semper aves quod abest, praesentia temnis', says Lucr. iii, 957—a common place often reiterated, e.g. at the opening of Horace's *Satires*; cf. Boëthius, *de consol.* ii, iv, §§ 9–12. The old saw is true: 'surgit amari aliquid'.

BIAS (sixth century B.C.). One of the Seven Wise Men of Greece. His aphorisms are famous. See his life in Diog. Laert.

AMPHIBIAN. So Columella, 'Man, a terrestrial animal, braves wind and wave, and dares to trust himself to the floods'; Hor. *Odes*, i, iii, 9–24 (a *locus classicus*).

FAILURE. Hor. *Epist.* i, i, 42 f.; Cic. *de off.* i, xxi.

POPULAR PLAYTHING. Read Browning's poem *The Patriot*.

FLUNG ASIDE. Cf. the words of Isocrates (*de pace*): 'You Athenians are in the habit of banishing your leaders, except such as speak to gratify your fancies and prejudices.'

MILTIADES. The hero of Marathon died dishonoured, unable to pay the fine imposed on him for failure during the expedition to Paros: see Cox, *Greek Statesmen*. Cf. the words of Plato in the *Gorgias*, 516.

THEMISTOCLES. Greatest of Athenian warriors and statesmen, died in exile; for alleged treason he was ostracized, 471 B.C. His life was written by Plutarch, which affords us a valuable supplement to the chapters in Herodotus and Thucydides relating to Themistocles.

EPHIALTES. A notable political reformer, perished at the hands of a hired assassin. Grote, *Hist. of Greece*, chap. xlv; [Aristotle] *on the Constitution*, chap. xxv (Sandys).

NEVER PUT THE QUESTION. After the battle of Arginusae, 406 B.C., ten naval officers were charged with neglecting to take up the bodies of the Athenians who were drowned during the conflict. Our text implies that they were all executed; but only six suffered. The trial was conducted illegally; Socrates, who is said to have been chairman of the meeting at which the matter was discussed, refused to put the question to the vote, as he tells us in the *Apology*, chap. xx (see Riddell's note, p. 82, and Gomperz, ii, 51 f.).* The alleged 'support' given to Socrates lacks any confirmation. For THERAMENES, the 'trimmer', and his connexion with Athenian politics,

* Compare Thompson's note on *Gorgias*, 473, 474.

cf. Grote, chap. lxiv, who deals severely with his character; so too does Aristophanes, *Frogs*, 541 and 967. For a different verdict see an interesting passage in [Aristotle] *on the Constitution*, xxviii.

ENOUGH OF THE PLATFORM. Axiochus would have applauded the dictum of John Morley: 'politics is a field where action is one long second-best, and where the choice constantly lies between two blunders'.

MOB...UNGRATEFUL. Plato would not have disagreed here. The Athenian democracy was too often both fickle and ungrateful, and at times cruel. But what did Plato substitute for democracy in his last work, the *Laws*? A state that might remind us, in part, of Sovietism with its negation of personal liberty; in part, of Medievalism with its Inquisition, where men are ceremonialized into political and religious uniformity—a βίος ἀβίωτος indeed, 'no life for a man'. Cf. Livingstone, *The Greek Genius*, chap. vii. For ἀψήκορος (which I render 'fickle') see Cope on Aristot. *Rhet.* ii, xii, § 4.

GENTLEMAN'S CRAFT, viz. that of statesmanship.

PRODICUS ASSERTING. See the letter of Epicurus to Menoeceus, in Diog. Laert. x, 125, already referred to, 365.

FASHIONABLE (or 'obvious', 'superficial'). For the Greek (ἐπιπολάζω) see Grant, Aristot. *Ethics*, i, iv, § 4.

TRICKS OF SOPHISTRY. One may refer to Longinus, xvii: 'a man feels resentment if, like a foolish boy, he finds himself being tricked by the paltry devices of some cunning orator'. Cf. Burton, *Anat. of Mel.* i, ii, 4 (7). But Burton is incorrect in part of his statement.

FORGETTING THAT YOU ARE DEAD. A humorous touch, of course. [370]

HOW COULD THERE BE PAIN, etc. Cf. the interpolated line in Soph. *Ajax*, 554 'lack of sensation is a painless evil'.

GAZE UP TO HEAVEN. With this passage compare the striking parallel in *Wisdom* vii, 17–21.

RETURN (ἀποκατάστασις). Properly a technical term of astronomy to signify the return of a planet to a position which it had previously occupied relating to the fixed stars or some other planet. Scott on *Hermetica*, vol. iii, 65.

DIVINE BREATH (or spirit). Consult E. de W. Burton, *Spirit, Soul and Flesh*, p. 115. The Greek expression 'πνεῦμα θεῖον' occurs in Menander (fourth century B.C.), the LXX, Philo, and in the Magic papyri, always with the fundamental meaning of 'divine spirit'.

SUFFER A CHANGE. I Cor. xv, 51 f. ('we shall all be changed'). Cf. *Hermetica*, xi, ii, § 15.

THIS PRISON-HOUSE. Above, 365. For the words that follow compare the superb description in Revel. xxi, 1–4.

PRESENCE OF TRUTH (or perhaps 'Reality'). So Maximus of Tyre can speak of 'the end of life laid up (or employed) in abundant and all-flourishing truth'.

371] SAGE (μάγος, from which comes our 'magic'). Herod. i, 107, 120, 140; Matth. ii, 1. Cf. Moulton, *Early Religious poetry of Persia*, chap. vi; Nock in *Beginnings of Christianity*, vol. v. Presumably by this term we must understand not a magician but a priest of the Zoroastrian religion: see Darmesteter, *Introd. to the Zend-Avesta* (S.B.E. vol. i).

XERXES. Crossed the Hellespont, to invade Greece, in 480 B.C.: see Herod. vii, 53 f. The Gobryes here named is otherwise unknown.

DELOS. An island in the Greek Archipelago, birthplace of the 'two deities', Apollo and Artemis.

BRONZE TABLETS. Bronze because this metal was really used for records. There was an old tradition that there existed in the mountains of Thrace certain tablets (συντάξεις) containing writings of Orpheus (just as the Hebrews received their Torah on stone tablets from Sinai, and the Mormons their revelation on golden plates): see the chorus in Eurip. *Alc.* 965 f. Orphic notions of the after-life are alluded to in the *Frogs* of Aristophanes, where we find a vivid picture of the delights enjoyed by Initiates; Virgil's sixth *Aeneid* (638 f.) is certainly inspired by Orphism. See Macchiolo, *From Orpheus to Paul* (1930), chaps. ii, v, together with Guthrie's *Orpheus and Greek Religion* (1934), especially chap. v, on Orphic beliefs in a future existence with its immortal joys for the pious and penalties for the impious, and on the doctrine of birth-cycles. Jebb on Theoph. *Char.* xxviii, 29. For a bizarre and highly coloured account of the next world (partly derived from Plato, though its ultimate source was in Orphic teaching), cf. Plutarch, *de sera numinum vindicta*, xxii, in connexion with the tale of Thespesius of Soli. See also Dill, *Roman Society from Nero*, iv, ii.

HYPERBOREANS. A legendary people in the far north, distinguished alike for their piety and happiness. For OPIS and HECAERGE see Frazer's note on Pausanias i, xliii, 4. 'This refers to the Hyperborean maidens, who were four (or rather 2×2) in number (Herod. iv, 33 and 35); according to Callimachus three, their names being Oupis, Loxos and Hecaerge (*b. ad Delum*, 292); two here. I can remember no other passage which gives that number, but the names agree with those mentioned by Callimachus, as far as they go, ὤπης and οὐπης being the same. I see no reason for supposing them men; the names are feminine, Ἑκάεργος being a blunder of someone who had Apollo's epithet in mind (from which indeed the name is formed, as the others are also from names or titles of one or other of the divine twins)' (Prof. H. J. Rose). Here I might add the words of Servius on Virg. *Aen.* xi, 532: alii putant Opim et Hecaergon nutritores Apollinis et Dianae fuisse; hinc Opim ipsam Dianam, Apollinem vero Hecaergon.

FORM OF A SPHERE. A recollection of Plato, *Tim.* 33 'the universe was formed (by God) in a rounded spherical shape, this being of all shapes the

most perfect'. The notion may be traced to Empedocles who speaks of the cosmic Power as 'rejoicing in his circular solitude'. Similarly in the *Hermetica*, viii, 3 'the Father gave matter a body and fashioned it into a sphere'. Perhaps one may here instance the famous medieval definition of deity as 'an infinite circle whose centre is everywhere and circumference nowhere', a saying twice referred to by Rabelais, and mentioned by Alexander Neckam, Nicolas of Cusa, Donne, Peter Sterry, Pascal, and others.

BROTHERS, Zeus, Poseidon, Pluto; CHILDREN OF BROTHERS, Minos, Aeacus, Rhadamanthus—a list which seems definitely Orphic.

ACHERON, COCYTUS. Two of the 'four infernal rivers' (Milton, *P.L.* ii, 578). Cf. Virg. *Aen.* vi, 295–297; Dante, *Inferno*, xiv. Observe that, above, ὑπὸ γυνίος (=beneath the earth) is used not of the interior of the earth but the lower half of the terrestrial globe, viz. the southern hemisphere, which was unknown to the ancients. It was invisible (ἀειδής): and such is the meaning of 'Hades'. Cf. J. A. Stewart, *The Myths of Plato*, pp. 110, 358. According to Plutarch, Chrysippus attacked Plato for his doctrine of future punishments in the underworld, comparing his arguments to the fabulous tales told by nurses to frighten unruly children. See Juv. ii, 149; Seneca, *Ep.* xxiv.

PLAIN OF TRUTH. The same phrase occurs in the myth in Plato's *Phaedr.* 248 (see Thompson's note), and in the *Hermetica* (ed. Scott: see iii, 583, where he quotes from Plutarch); cf. Adam, *Religious Teachers of Greece*, pp. 107, 108. For a Christian rendering of this account of the Better Land, the reader would do well to examine the hymn 'Jerusalem my happy home' (Anon., late sixteenth century). The Judge-Inquisitors in Hades are alluded to in the Myth of Er (Plat. *Rep.* 614). There is something similar in the Egyptian Book of the Dead. Minos, Aeacus, and Rhadamanthus are bracketed as Judges in the *Gorgias* Myth, 523, 524; see too *Apol.* 41, and Jowett's *Plato*, ii, 183 f., 318 f.

FALSEHOOD IMPOSSIBLE. Cf. the noble words in *Hamlet*, iii, iii, 64:

'There, is no shuffling; there, the action lies
In his true nature, and we ourselves compelled,
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
To give in evidence.'

GOOD ANGEL (δαίμων). A sort of familiar spirit guarding a man throughout his life: Plat. *Rep.* 620. Cf. Scott's note in *Hermetica*, ii, 279 f. So the 'patron angels' in Hebrew literature; Peter's 'angel' in Acts xii, 15; the 'fravashi' in the *Zend-Avesta*.

CYCLIC CHORUSES. The phrase occurs in the Orphic hymns. Such a chorus would dance round the θυμέλη (= altar) in the midst of the orchestra, singing dithyrambic poetry. Bentley on Phalaris, pp. 317, 318 (ed. Wagner). The dithyramb was originally a song of praise to the god Dionysus, but afterwards the word took a wider range. From a chapter in Plutarch, already referred to, one may quote this: 'They suppose that they are helped by

cleansing rites which sanctify them and enable them to live after death a life of play and dance, in a world of light and clear air.'

LIFE ALL SWEETNESS. So Theodoret's way of recording a Christian's death—'he is passed to the life that knows no ending, the tearless life'.

INITIATED (μεμυημένοι), viz. into the greater Eleusinian mysteries. Read the Choric song in Aristoph. *Frogs*, 449 f., observing that the mockery of Dionysus there does not obscure the real religious feelings of the chorus of Initiates. Cf. too Soph. frag. 837, thus rendered by Headlam:

'O thrice blessed they
That ere they pass to Hades have beheld
These mysteries; for them only, in that world,
Is life; the rest have utter misery.'

Passages in Pindar proclaim the same doctrine, e.g. *Olymp.* II, 57 f. The earliest allusion to the happiness of the Initiated after death appears to be in the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter*, 480 f. One may compare the remark of Antisthenes in Diog. Laert. VI, 4. Cf. Plutarch (frag. 120 ap. Stob.): after quitting the body the soul of the Initiate is introduced to 'pure spots and meadows, with voices and dances and the solemnities of holy liturgies and sights. There the man becomes really the master of himself'. Contrast the lot of the uninitiated; *Gorg.* 493, *Phaedo*, 69. The institution of these sacred rites of mystical initiation was attributed to the legendary Orpheus.

CHILDREN OF HEAVEN. Properly speaking, as the Scholiast seems to suggest, sanctified to the service of Demeter and Persephone (κόρη), through the mystic rites (τελεταί). Axiochus is called γεννητής τῶν θεῶν because he is already one of the Initiated. Rohde, *Psyche*, pp. 602, 603.

HERACLES. Before his descent (κατάβασις) into the lower regions to bring up Cerberus, Heracles went to Eleusis for initiation: see Apollodorus, II, v, 12 (Frazer).

DIONYSUS. A piece of Hellenistic speculation on the god, starting from the dogma that Dionysus was a mortal who was deified for his merits (*Hor. Odes*, III, iii, 13-15). Now Iacchus-Dionysus is connected with Eleusis; therefore Dionysus, before becoming a god, was no doubt like all pious folk initiated there, the more so as it is well known that he went down to Hades to fetch up his mother. Therefore he may have prepared himself for such an adventure by being initiated, so that, if anything went wrong, he was on the safe side. He and Heracles did not go down together, but at different times and on different errands; they are coupled here as the two most illustrious mystics ever initiated. (From notes kindly supplied to me by Prof. H. J. Rose.)

EREBUS, personified darkness, was, according to Hesiod (*Theog.* 123), a son of CHAOS: Milton, *P.L.* II, 894, 895.

TARTARUS. For a description of this department of the Inferno, cf. Hes. *Theog.* 726-781, and for the daughters of Danaus, for Sisyphus, and Tityus,

see *Class. Dict.* The FURIES (Ἐρινύες) were generally reckoned to be three in number: cf. L. and S.

AVENGERS, vindices sceleris, Cic. *de N.D.* III, §46. Cf. *Leges*, I, 46 [372] insectantur Furiae non ardentibus taedis, sicut in fabulis, sed angore conscientiae. The author is attempting here something in the way of a climax; the wicked are frightened by the mouthing of them by nondescript monsters, scorched by the torches of the Avengers (Ποινά) and more vehemently tortured by methods not particularized.

EVERLASTING PUNISHMENTS. See Lucr. III, 1011 f. for a picture of the torments awaiting sinners in hell; Tantalus, Sisyphus, and Tityus are all mentioned there. Read the Myth in the *Phaedo*, 107 f. and the Dantesque account given in Virg. *Aen.* VI, 648 f., who derives it, in part at least, from Plato. Plato (*Gorg.* 525) recognizes a class of incurable sinners.* Brahmanism, Buddhism, Islam and Zoroastrianism all have their hells of purgatory and punishment, and this belief was familiar in the religions of ancient Mexico and Peru. See the Zend-Avesta (*Vendidad*), Farg. XIX; and, in the Q'rân, the seventh Sura (*Al-Aarâf*). Add to these references Cicero, *Tusc. D.* I, v, 10 f.

SOUL IS IMMORTAL. So Plato says in the *Phaedrus*, 245. The doctrine of the soul's immortality was the common inheritance of all the ancient Indian philosophers, as it was the steady belief of Plato. Note these words in Diog. Laert. VIII, 28: 'Soul is immortal, because that from which it is detached (ἀφ' οὗ ἀπέσπασται) is immortal.' Belief in the soul's immortality is (said a second-century philosopher, Atticus: Eusebius, *Prep. Evang.* xv, 809) the cement which holds together the Platonic School; without it Plato's whole philosophy collapses. See Caird, *Evolution of Theology in Greek Philosophy*, vol. I, chap. viii. Very striking are the words of Plato's celebrated seventh Letter (335): 'One must genuinely believe in the old sacred writings which indicate to us that the soul is immortal, that judgement awaits it, and that it suffers the heaviest penalties after one has departed from the body.' Hardly less striking are the words of Porphyry in his beautiful letter to his wife Marcella—'the inspired thought (ἐνθεον φρόνημα), fixed upon God, has knowledge of Him indeed' (συνάπτεται τῷ θεῷ). Cf. Plato, *Rep.* 611 c.

One may perhaps conclude here with a passage from the *Laws*, 905, which is one of the most impressive passages in Plato, and forms a significant commentary on the latter part of the *Axiochus*: 'The Justice of heaven is such that neither you nor anyone else, if he has fallen into evil ways, can ever boast of escaping; the Powers above have ordained its supremacy; you must take heed, therefore, to the uttermost. Never will Justice forget; be you never so small and creep into the depths of the earth, or so high that you exalt yourself to heaven, you must pay the fitting penalty, either here in this world or in some other grim region whither you shall be borne away.'

* Augustine would certainly have agreed with him: see what he writes in the *de civitate Dei*. Cf. Romans II, 6-9.

Supplementary Notes

- 366 πόρος, *duct.* Cf. Cic. *Tusc. D.* 1 § 47 foramina illa, quae patent ad animum a corpore, callidissimo artificio natura fabricata est. The notion and the term may have been introduced by Alcmaeon of Croton, a younger contemporary of Pythagoras (Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy*). For Alcmaeon, however, the πόροι were a physiological expression denoting the passages along which sensations reach the heart. There appears to be no trace in Plato of anything to lead to the conception of a ψυχή παρεσπαρμένη τοῖς πόροις. In Epicurus we find a ψ.π., and he may have taken it over from Democritus: cf. *Epist.* i, 63 (Bailey, p. 38); schol. ad *epist.* i, 67 (Bailey, p. 40 n.). These two references are due to Dr N. Bachtin.
- κριτικοί, *critics.* Similarly in the Pinax of Cebes. This use of the word alone appears to indicate a comparatively late date. Would not a contemporary of Socrates have found room for the βαρυσόδης in his list?
- 369 ΜΟΒ UNGRATEFUL: cf. Plat. *Rep.* 557f., Cic. *de rep.* i, 42. The usual end of ultra-democratical government is indicated by Polybius, vi, 9.
- 371 With the account here given of the happiness of the righteous in the Underworld, compare the words of Porphyrius in his life of Plotinus (xxiii), where he speaks of the after-life of the dead philosopher. It seems strange that there is no Vision of God in the *Axiarchus*.
- 372 EVERLASTING PUNISHMENTS. According to Plato, punishment would normally be 'pro salute animae', i.e. remedial not retributive. The medical nature of punishment is recognized also by Aristotle.

SELECT GLOSSARY

- διαχλευάζω c. acc. = gird at. Like χλευάζω. 364
 μορμολύττομαι = be scared at. Only here in this sense.
 ἐπιτωθάζω = poke fun at (generally + accus.). Ruhnken, *Timaeus*, s.v. τωθάζω.
 εὐσεβέομαι = be revered. Similarly in Antiphon.
 ῥαίζω = recover (from illness), feel easier. Plat. *Rep.* 462d.
 σύμπτωμα = symptom (of disease).
 ἄφῃ = wound, hurt. Lightfoot on Colossians ii, 19.
 ἀναφέρομαι = sigh. Probably a reminiscence of Homeric language. Others 365
 would take it to mean 'gradually recover' (from the fit), 'come to myself'.
 δυσασποσπάζω = hardly to be torn away.
 περιττός = out of the common, remarkable. Soph. *O.T.* 841.
 λεληθότως = λάθρα, imperceptibly. The word occurs in Clem. Alex. and in Cicero's *Letters*.
 ἀπυστος = unheard. Hom. *Od.* i, 242. In Soph. *O.C.* 489 = inaudible.
 *ἀνεπιστάσια = thoughtlessness, inattention.
 *ἄμυχιστος = superficial. 366
 φλεγμονή = inflammation. Cf. 368 where = boil, tumour. A medical term.
 δυσἀρέστησις = dissatisfaction.
 παιδοτρέτης = physical trainer. Newman on Aristotle, *Politics*, III, 520.
 τακτικός here = teacher of tactics.
 φόβητρον = bugbear, terror (always plural in LXX). 367
 ἐπίκτητος = perishable, subject to death. Examples in Eus. *Pr. Ev.* 691, and in the *Hermetica*.
 δυσάλθης = hard to cure (δυσάλθητος). Very rare; but cf. Eus. *Pr. Ev.* 40.
 ὀβολοστάτης = petty usurer (as fem. only here).
 ἐνεχυράζω = take as a pledge. So in Aeschines.
 ἐπιτήδευσις = occupation, pursuit. 368
 χειρωνακτικός (as a noun here) = χειροτέχνης, artisan.
 πλωτικός = seaman (adj. for πλωτήρ).
 ἐπομβρία = heavy rain)(αὐχμός.
 ἐπικάουσις = scorching. Joined with ἐρυσίβη = blight; cf. Ruhnken, *Timaeus* (s.v.).
 σφυγματώδης = throbbing.
 ἀπότευξις = failure. Rare.
 πομπύζω = flatter, applaud. Cf. Juv. vi, 584 poppysma.
 συρίττω later Attic for συρίζω = hiss an actor. Dem. *de cor.* § 265.

- 369 ἀψήκορος = fastidious (see note).
 συνερωνίζω = gather together (like chance contributions).
 σύγκλυς = colluvies, a rabble. Thuc. VII, 5.
 ἀπευκταῖος = deprecandus (quod quis ἀπεύξοιτ' ἄν).
 μεταλλάσσω (sc. βίον) = quit (life); cf. 367c.
 ἐπιπολάζω: lit. 'lie on the surface', so = be prevalent.
 *λεσχηνεία = gossip.
 εὐέπεια = eloquence. Plat. *Phaedr.* 267; Eus. *Pr. Ev.* 513.
 370 συνυποτίθηναι, in midd. (only so here) = assume (in arguing).
 *μεγεθουργία = attempting great deeds.
 παραπήγνυμι = delineate on a tablet, παράπηγμα (Cic. *ad Att.* v, 14, § 1).
 371 αὐτοχορήγητος = self-furnished. Only example given in L. and S.
 ἁγιστεῖα (ἡ) = holy rites. Rare; but cf. Eus. *Pr. Ev.* 357.
 γεννητής = Latin contribulis. See the quotation from Aristotle in the
 Scholiast's note.
 ἐναύω (in midd.) = to borrow (courage, θάρσος). Prop. 'to kindle fire'.
 Veitch, *Greek Verbs*, s.v. αὐώ.
 ἀνήνυτος = endless. Of Penelope's web in Plat. *Phaed.* 84.

Words with an asterisk affixed are, apparently, found only in the *Axiocbus*.

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